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The Geosat Committee, Inc.

TO:

Friends of Geosat and Landsat Supporters

FROM:

Frederick B. Henderson III, President

DATE:

February 22, 1989

SUBJ:

Future of Landsat Program



The future of the Landsat program is clear. At present, NOAA is planning to shut down Landsats 4 and 5 on March 31, 1989. The 1988 NOAA sponsored studies and 1989 NOAA Action Plan for the Landsat 6 follow-on are embargoed by OMB and NOAA with no immediate plans for public release. The 1990 budget presently has funding for continued development of Landsat 6.

Should Landsats 4 and 5 be terminated while still operational and collecting worldwide MSS and TM data? It would take a minimal portion of funds from NOAA's budget to keep these satellites operational. Short term funding to maintain operations could be found if DOC/NOAA's upper management would alter their priorities slightly. Unfortunately, there has been no indication of additional Congressional funding unless it is through the supplemental budget process in June.

Consequently, the Geosat Board of Directors recommend you write, telex or FAX your opinions NOW to your Senators and Congressman with copies to Senators Ernest Hollings and Warren Rudman and Congressmen Robert Roe and Neal Smith (addresses enclosed). Copies should also be sent to U.S. Secretary of Commerce Robert A. Mosbacher, NOAA Administrator William Evans and EOSAT President Charles Williams. Copies will be effective if sent to your local newspapers and The Washington Post. The letter would be most effective stated in your own words expressing why shutting down Landsats 4 and 5 would be detrimental. A copy of my letter on Geosat's behalf to Secretary Mosbacher is also enclosed for your information. The Geosat office would also appreciate receiving copies of any of your letters for our records and possible hearings and testimony on this issue.

For Geosat non-U.S. companies, we ask that you write directly to Mosbacher, Evans, or Williams. Expressing your opinions in this matter is equally important as that of domestic U.S. companies.

Your support now is <u>CRITICAL</u> if you wish to see Landsats 4 and 5 remain operational. If you have any questions or need additional information, please call the Geosat office.

FBHIII:lg Enclosures

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The Geosat Committee, Inc.

February 10, 1989

Honorable Robert A. Mosbacher U.S. Secretary of Commerce U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE 14th & Constitution Ave., N.W. Herbert C. Hoover Building, Room 5851 Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Secretary Mosbacher:

The United States again stands on the brink of losing another U.S. technology to Japan, France and others. Around the world, countries are rapidly developing civil land observing satellite systems to provide global economic resource intelligence for their own national economic and security needs. The U.S. Landsat program is stymied because of its premature push into commercialization. Also the lack of continuing government commitment to the development of U.S. Landsat technology and recognition of it as a U.S. national asset in face of growing international competition has been a hindrance.

The Landsat system is a national asset because it jointly serves public, national security, and foreign policy interests of the United States. It provides long term monitoring capabilities for growing U.S. and international studies of earth systems and global change and provides the U.S. economy with global resource intelligence necessary for U.S. competition in the world market place. Landsat serves to stimulate U.S. technological commercial opportunities at home and abroad.

The future of this U.S. technological asset will be determined largely by the Bush Administration. The Administration, along with Congress, must first determine whether continuity of civil land observing satellites is in the U.S. national interests and worthy of further government support. This technology's future cannot be the sole responsibility of U.S. commercial industry. The longer term issues must be carefully deliberated by both the government and by the private sector.

In the short term, there are three urgent actions we ask you as Secretary of Commerce to take immediately:

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February 1989